

VZCZCXRO7150  
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK RUEHROV  
DE RUEHKU #0666/01 1640326  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 120326Z JUN 08  
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1649  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RHWSMRC/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA// IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 000666

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, NEA/PI, INR/NESA, R/MR, I/GNEA,  
B/BXN, B/BRN, NEA/PPD, NEA/IPA  
LONDON FOR NEA WATCHER  
PARIS FOR NEA WATCHER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [XF](#) [KU](#) [KWMN](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)

SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION -- TIP and GCC Foreign Ministers'  
Collective Statement

-----  
SUMMARY  
-----

Wednesday, June 11, 2008

11. (U) Summary and Comment. A limited amount of press coverage immediately followed the U.S. Department of State's June 4 release of the annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report. However, there since has been a plethora of articles, editorials, and op-eds responding to the report's contents. Although most of the articles offer scathing criticisms of the report's contents, some laud the report for bringing to light the problem of human trafficking in Kuwait. Additionally, all local English and Arabic language dailies carried articles about the June 10 GCC Foreign Ministers' joint statement, which characterized the report as "unfriendly" to the GCC countries. This cable highlights some of the subsequent press coverage of the TIP report, as well as the press coverage of the June 10 statement. End Summary and Comment.

12. (U) Block Quotes:

-- Commentator from al-Rai, a moderate Arabic language daily, Mubarak Mohammed Al-Hajiri criticized the findings of the TIP report in a column headlined, "The U.S. is on the Black List" Mr. Al-Hajiri wrote (06/11): "If your house is built of glass, then you should not start throwing stones. The U.S. arrogantly accuses us and other GCC countries of violating human rights while the U.S. is built on the remains and scalps of the Red Indians. Those who survived of that nation are still suffering from oppression and the deprivation of their human rights. The U.S. State Department ought to assess its domestic problems every now and then. This proves to us that the U.S. political house is built of glass. This house is tottering and doomed to fail. The U.S. with its ridiculous and contradictory reports has opened doors that it had better keep closed."

-- Under the headline "Please Shut Up," liberal columnist Hassan Al-Issa wrote in the liberal Arabic language daily Al-Qabas (06/11): "Neither the Government of Kuwait nor the committee council that was formed to study the habits of foreigners who have invaded our society must have heard of the proverb that says if you were infected with vice then you should hide. Otherwise they would not have made these ridiculous claims in Kuwait's response to the U.S. Department of State Trading in Persons report. The government's statements have made us look even worse in the eyes of the world. The government should have kept silent, or at least said transparently that we were too busy with our domestic affairs, and have not paid attention to the cases of imported laborers. We were trying to appease our members of parliament and their grilling of our ministers, and forgot about the human rights of domestic workers. How can officials not believe these workers when they keep

reading about domestic workers jumping from windows and hanging themselves from trees? The Government of Kuwait and this council should remain silent because they have given us a foolish demonstration on how to handle this case."

-- Mohammed Al-Shummary wrote in the Arabic language pro-government daily Al-Anbaa (06/11): "It's true that Kuwait as a country should not be blamed for what some immoral people are doing in terms of human rights violations, but it is strange to witness the continued leniency in dealing with these violators. These are things that are captured by the annual reports against Kuwait, which show the many human rights violations are committed in Kuwait."

¶3. (U) All Arabic and English Kuwaiti dailies reported from regional and international news agencies on the GCC Foreign Minister's June 10 meeting in Jeddah. Some papers -- such as Al-Anbaa, Alam Al-Yawm, and Al-Rai -- reprinted the entire closing statement issued by the G.C.C. Ministers. All the other Kuwaiti dailies published only the statement pertaining to the TIP report: "The Council expresses deep regret at the false information released by a report issued by the U.S. State Department, recently accusing the GCC countries of human trafficking." The statement went on to say that the information aims at exerting political pressure on the GCC states, calling on the U.S. State Department to review its "unfriendly policies" towards the GCC member states.

\*\*\*\*\* \*  
For more reporting from Embassy Kuwait, visit:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/kuwait/?cable s>

Visit Kuwait's Classified Website:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/kuwait/>

KUWAIT 00000666 002 OF 002

\*\*\*\*\* \*  
JONES